

“I remember when...”

A COMPILATION OF MEMORIES FROM THE PEOPLE OF
MELKSHAM AND SURROUNDING DISTRICT.
INCORPORATING MELKSHAM HOSPITAL FROM 1868-1991.

Melksham Cottage Hospital

ESTABLISHED 1868



MELKSHAM HOSPITAL
1895

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INTRODUCTION

This book is a collation of memories from the people of Melksham and the surrounding District to Melksham Hospital, as a tribute to its achievements from 1868-1991, and all the wonderful people - past and present - who in some way have contributed to its present success.

Melksham Hospital is a purpose built 43 bed Community Hospital situated in Spa Road and was opened by the Marquis of Bath on 27 July 1938, progressing from a modest 4 bed Cottage Hospital on a site on the South Side of Lowbourne and was established as a hospital that was intended to receive only those patients who could not be treated in their own home or be moved any distance.

Melksham Hospital has continued to expand with the generous help and support of the local community and surrounding District, League of Friends, Local Banks, Industries, Traders, and Catering Groups - which still exists today.

Melksham Hospital is today a Community Hospital that proudly projects a constant caring, happy family atmosphere with a dedicated staff that respectfully follow the steadfast and expert guidance of the present Matron, Mrs Ruby Rosewarne, in post since 1974.

With very best wishes for its continued success.

MEMORIES AS CONTRIBUTED BY MEMBERS OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Alma, Balaclava, Inkerman and all its associations with Florence Nightingale were still vivid in the minds of the townspeople of Melksham when some ten years later in the high summer of 1868 - June 26 to be precise - a public meeting was held in the Town Hall "to consider the propriety of establishing a Cottage Hospital at Melksham with the object of affording immediate and efficient surgical assistance to accidents and urgent cases of disease occurring in the neighbourhood".

There was no intention of competing with the larger establishments in Bath etc but merely to receive patients who could not properly be healed at their own home and could not for any reason be moved any distance. Subscriptions of £50.00 were promised at the public meeting.

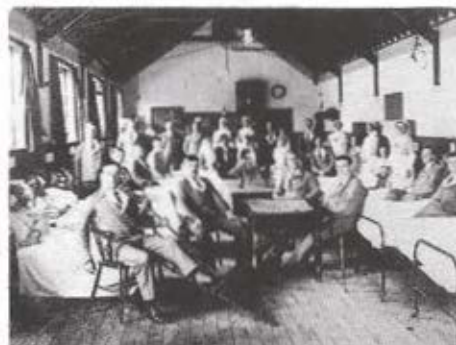
The Cottage Hospital was No. 4 Lowbourne now the Newsagents owned by Mr D J Pidgeon - formerly Bolwell - and provided a

3 bed ward for men on the first floor and three separate rooms for women on the second floor with board room and staff accommodation below. The first patient was admitted in November 1869. The record show that the establishment was furnished at a cost of £62.17s 5d and annual expenses were estimated at £120.00 including the salary of an unqualified nurse.

The Hospital flourished and with the passing of some 25 years the need for new premises was soon apparent and due to the generosity of the late Mr George White of Whitley a new building now the site of Melksham Labour Club was started in 1895 and opened shortly afterwards for the benefit of the residents of the town and district.

Extensions and improvements were made amongst which were:-

- 1908 a new and modern operating theatre
- 1913 a new upper floor to provide a better accommodation for staff.
- 1921 an ex-army hut provided new male ward accommodation also a new kitchen was added.



EX-ARMY HUT WAS A MENS WARD DURING
1914-1918 WAR

- 1929 two new wards provided and opened by the Lord Lieutenant the Earl of Radnor
- 1931 X-ray apparatus provided and skilled massage facilities

The average number of cases treated for the first few years was 30 by the early 1930's some 350 in-patients and 500 out-patients were treated.

Of course such treatment had to be paid for but a Hospital Association enabled local residents of the poorer classes to make small annual contributions against the time when they or their families might require treatment.

Enormous voluntary help was given, Carnival proceeds were donated to the hospital, gifts of newspapers, comestibles etc were also made. A Ladies Linen League provided bed and table linen, The Harvest

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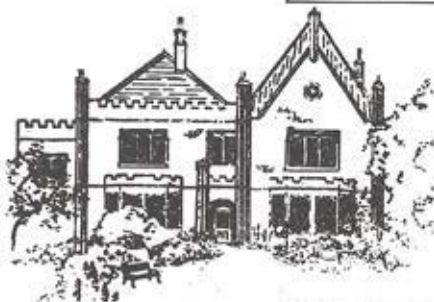
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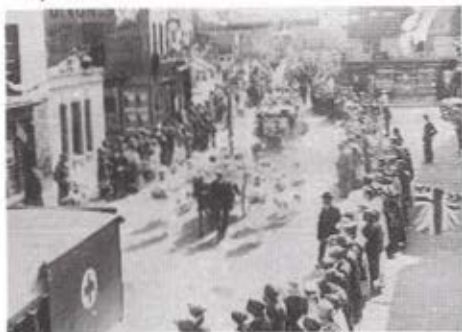
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0249 816928/812537

'BLUE CROSS'

THE SIGN OF
A BETTER
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REGISTERED NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION

Festival Gifts at schools also went to the hospital.



In conjunction with the hospital small mention might here be made that as early as 1905 the need for a District Nurse was maintained right up until 1948 when the National Health Service took over this duty.

In 1934 a magnificent legacy from the late Mrs Ludlow Bruges provided some £200,000 (out of which an ambulance was bought immediately) for the establishment of the present building in Spa Road — by far one of the most up-to-date hospitals for a town of this size in the general area and this was officially opened by the Marquis of Bath K G Chairman of the Wiltshire County Council, on 27 July 1938 and whilst the organisation and control of hospitals has vastly changed by the present day it is certain that this short history will emphasise that progress in Melksham has been particularly rapid in 108 years of care and attention to the sick.

The old hospital not having been disposed by 1939 was re-opened as a maternity hospital under the war time powers of the Wiltshire County Council and many children of expectant mothers evacuated from London as well as local residents who were born here. Since the war it has been used as an educational centre and of course latterly as the Labour Club. The meagre beginnings of which we are reminded in no way lessons the gratuities which must have been felt then and is still felt today by patients and relatives alike for the care by the successors of that first "unqualified Nurse".

Some further facts which have come to light in research:

- 1868 First Medical Office Dr Jasper Rumboll King. First Matron Miss Cox
- 1878 Dr Ingram Keir joined staff
- 1885 Dr C F Rumboll nephew of the first Medical Officer joined staff
- 1892 Mr C M Maggs appointed Secretary
- 1907 Factories started ½d (less than ½p today) per week subscription. Contributions from Avon Rubber Company brought in £8.2s. 1½d and

Contributions from Stratton Son & Mead Ltd 5s.2d.

- 1910 The first carnival held in aid of the hospital



- 1915 Mr Maggs (on active service) resigned as secretary after 22 years and Mr E J Lee was appointed.
Egg Sunday for the first time brought in gifts of 894 eggs
- 1914-1918 War — A large number of wounded soldiers including Australian and New Zealanders were treated.
- 1919 Dr Leigh joined Medical Staff
- 1932 Mr E J Lee resigned and Mr G Davis appointed Secretary.

**Contributed by
Mr Peter Brown
Considered Local Historian**

MATRONS

- 1868 Miss Cox
- 1869 Miss Tayloy - Matron for approximately 17 years
- 1891 Miss Varden
- 1895 Miss F E Driver
- 1906 Miss Saunder - Charge Nurse
- 1909 Miss L Way - approximately 4 years
- 1918 Miss A M Beavan — approximately 14 years
- 1933 Miss D Jones - approximately 5 years
- 1948? Miss Tranter
- 1962 Miss McKay - 12 years
- 1974 Mrs Rosewarne - Continuing

Sr Wilshire - 1st Male Ward Sister at Melksham Hospital in 1938 eventually married Dr Keir in 1946.

When I first came to Melksham we had a cinema and Saturday Mornings children used to go there, also grown ups used it in the evenings. That closed, then the railway, which some of us used to go to work, caused big losses to the town. Later on I asked Burrett & Wells, a coach company, if I got people together could we have coach weekends, so I

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started with speedway to Bristol and Swindon. The knocks came on the door at home and at work asking if I could get a coach to hear the stars at the Colston Hall or at the Hippadrome, also weekends at Blackpool, mostly 2 coaches for that.

Some who used to come on the trips found partners and some got married, I was invited to 2 or 3 of the weddings which I went to, one is a home carer now. It made a happy time for one and all. Blackpool was the main outing for the lights.

**Contributed by
Mrs Annie Pugh,
Presently a Day-Care patient at Melksham
Hospital**



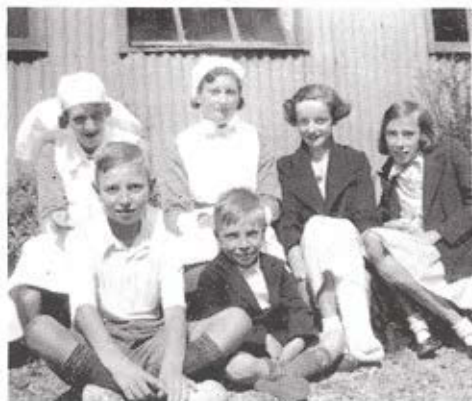
As a boy I attended St Michael's School and I used to walk down Church Walk to Melksham Hospital — which was then on the site of the Labour Club — to have my lunch. My mother worked at the hospital at the time as a domestic but changed roles and uniform at lunch time to help serve to the patients I continued to do this even when the hospital moved to its present site in Spa Road right up to the time when I joined the Armed Forces to go to war in 1945.

During the war I slept at the hospital in fact I slept at the hospital more often than I did at home. I remember Matron Jones and Casualty Sister, Sr Salter, and Matron Beaven who eventually moved into a flat in a Spa House which was inbetween the reading rooms (now Orchard Estate Agents) and two big private houses which have since been demolished.

The Spa shop used to be a bank called Capital and Counties Bank with a big Cedar tree in the vicinity. The District Nurses quarters were in the same vicinity and 2 nurses lived there one wore a brown uniform and one wore blue. Pidgeons Card Shop was the first hospital in Melksham and next to it was Manning the Drapers and a hardware shop.

At Christmas I used to go to the big Cedar Tree in the childrens ward and Father Christmas would give us all a present. Miss Boston was the Physiotherapist then and she used to take the domestic staff on a picnic every year and I used to go with them I always looked forward to these outings, they were good days and Melksham Hospital was my second home and somehow you always had the feeling that you belonged there even today as a regular out-patient of the hospital there is still that sense of belonging and family unity, I suppose this is because Melksham Hospital belongs to the people and the people care about their hospital.

**Contributed by
Mr Godsall.**



IVAN GODSALL FRONT RIGHT

IVAN GODSALL WITH HOSPITAL CAT OUTSIDE
HOSPITAL (SPA ROAD)



ARTICLES REPRODUCED FROM 1876—1877

The Melksham Cottage Hospital is established mainly on the Cottage Hospital system originated by *Mr. NARRX* in 1859.

1. A small number of beds so that the work of a hospital may be carried on in a Cottage like that of a poor man, and with a single nurse.
2. Equality of privilege to subscribers in recommending patients, the patient paying a weekly sum according to his means towards his maintenance.
3. The Cottage Hospital is open to all Medical men in the neighbourhood who choose to make use of it.

The Melksham Cottage Hospital is a small house, fitted up with the necessary beds, baths, and appliances for the treatment of disease and surgical injuries.

It is intended for the benefit of the labouring classes and small tradesmen who are unable to obtain in their own houses the diet, ventilation, and nursing which would be conducive to their speedy recovery from illness.

MILK.	HALF.	ENTIRE.
Bread 14 oz.	Meat 8 oz.	Meat 12 oz.
Rice 2 oz.	Bread 16 oz.	Bread 16 oz.
Milk 3 pints	Potatoes 8 oz.	Potatoes 16 oz.
Sugar 1 oz.	Barley 1½ oz.	Barley 1½ oz.
	Salt ½ oz.	Salt ½ oz.
	Tea ¼ oz.	Tea ¼ oz.
	Sugar 1½ oz.	Sugar 1½ oz.
	Milk 6 oz.	Milk 6 oz.
	Vegetables 4 oz.	Vegetables 4 oz.
	Butter 1 oz.	Butter 1 oz.
	Flour ¼ oz.	Flour ¼ oz.

Anything further to be specially ordered by the Medical Officer, and termed an extra.

1. The patients are to obey the orders of the *Mastron* acting under the instructions of the Medical Officers.

2. Patients are not to leave the Hospital without an order from the Medical Officer under whose care they are.

3. Hours of admission for visitors or friends of patients, from Two until Four o'clock on Sundays and Thursdays.

4. No Food or Liquor is to be brought into the Hospital except such as is ordered by the Medical Officer.

5. Patients cannot be admitted without producing a card signed by a subscriber, who will be responsible that the requisite payments are made.

6. No patient shall remain on the Books more than One Month without a fresh recommendation, when the Honorary Secretary shall call a consultation of the whole of the Medical Officers to decide and report for the information of the Committee as to the desirability of his detention or removal.

7. Patients who offend against any of the Rules of the House or behave themselves irregularly or indecently, shall be expelled, and shall not be re-admitted without an express order from the Committee.

EPITOME OF CASES TREATED.

From 1st October, 1876, to 30th September, 1877.

Beds 6. Cases 26. Medical 15. Surgical 11.

Result.—Cured	11
Relieved	9
Died	1
In Hospital	5
TOTAL.....	26

Average time of Cases under treatment, 29½ days.

List of Presentations to the Cottage Hospital.

Game	WALTER HUME LONG, Esq.
Game	MISS R. TALBOT.
London Papers	MISS FOWLER, Elm Grove.
Scrap Book	MASTER GUANWELL.
Scrap Book	MRS. BARNWELL.
A Garden Seat	REV. E. L. BARNWELL.
Crutches, Leg Rest, &c.	MRS. WILKINSON, Broughton.
British Workman Papers, &c.	MISS FOWLER.
Pictures, Papers, Bed Quilt, and Old Linen	MRS. LOVER.
Pictures	REV. PRESBYTERY F. WARRE.
A Bed Quilt and Scrap Book	MRS. WARRE.
Picture Frames	MR. JOHN BALL.
Pictures, Texts, &c.	MISS PHELPS.
Linen	MISS HUGHES.
Elastic Stockings and Crutches	ADMIRAL MONTAGU.
A Respirator	WADHAM LOCKE, Esq.
The Weekly Melksham Times	MR. NOSWORTHY.
Papers	MRS. KENRICK.
Nightingale Jacket	MISS E. WARRE.

Year.	Cases.	Days.	Expenditure.	Approximate cost per case.
1869	30	19	147 16 0	4 18 8
1870	33	28	155 6 11	4 13 11
1871	25	35	141 19 7	5 13 7
1872	33	27	101 1 5	3 14 10
1873	27	25½	137 7 3	5 1 9
1874	29	25½	147 15 2	5 16 0
1875	28	26½	136 19 9	4 18 0
1876	31	26½	159 1 5	5 2 7
1877	26	29½	150 9 3	5 0 4

THOMAS MATRAVERS,

Honorary Secretary.

MELKSHAM UNION.

BOARD ROOM, SEMINGTON WORKHOUSE,
26th October, 1876.

Copy of Resolutions unanimously adopted this day with reference to the admission of Pauper Patients into either of the Cottage Hospitals at Trounbridge and Melksham.

1. That no Pauper Patient be sent to the Hospital (cases of emergency excepted) unless the consent of the Board of Management be first obtained.
2. That on the admission of a Pauper Patient into the Hospital, the Medical Officer do give notice thereof to the Relieving Officer of the District, who will report such admission to the Board of Guardians, at their next meeting.
3. That when, in cases of emergency, a Pauper Patient is received into the Hospital, the Board of Management shall be at liberty to remove the Patient to the Union Workhouse, at the expense of this Board, if considered desirable and safe to do so by two Medical Gentlemen.
4. That the sum of five shillings weekly be allowed by the Board towards the support of each Pauper Patient received at the Hospital, under the foregoing rules.

Extract from "HANDY BOOK OF COTTAGE HOSPITALS,"
By HORACE SWETE

MELKSHAM COTTAGE HOSPITAL. Established 1858. 4 Beds.

"This is a Cottage Hospital on the Cranleigh model; open to all Medical Men.

"The Furniture cost £62 17s. 6d., the Annual Expenditure being £84 18s. 10d., of which the Patients have paid £12 6s. 4d.

"Thirty cases were received. From the nature of the cases entered in the Report, the work of this little Hospital has evidently been most successful."

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Melksham Cottage Hospital, held at the Town Hall, on Monday, 6th November, 1876.

Present—The Rev. Prebendary F. Warre, Rev. F. Slater, Rev. R. M. Hobson, Admiral Sir Charles Shadwell, K.C.B., Messrs. J. W. Awdry, A. Gore, E. G. Flocks, H. Simpson, A. Cochrane, G. J. Perry, and T. Matravets.

The Rev. Prebendary F. Warre, in the Chair.

1st Minute.—Resolved that the Eighth Annual Report be printed and distributed among the Subscribers.

2nd Minute.—Mr. Gore proposed, Admiral Sir Charles Shadwell seconded, that the opinion of the Meeting is that it would not be advisable to add a Dispensary to the present Cottage Hospital; but in saying so they do not intend to express any opinion adverse to Dispensaries in general.

3rd Minute.—The Vicar proposed and Mr. Awdry seconded that a vote of thanks be tendered to the Medical Gentlemen and the Hon. Secretary for their valuable services.

4th Minute.—Sir Charles Shadwell proposed and Mr. Awdry seconded that a vote of thanks be tendered to the Clergymen and Ministers of all denominations who have preached Sermons on behalf of the Institution, and to the Ladies who have kindly presented articles.

5th Minute.—Sir Charles Shadwell proposed and Mr. Cochrane seconded that a vote of thanks be tendered to the Vicar for his services in presiding at the meeting.

Signed,

FRANCIS WARRE, Chairman.




BALANCE SHEET

The Treasurer in Account with the Melksham Cottage Hospital.

RECEIPTS.		DISBURSEMENTS.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
To balance from last year	79 2 0	By Fuel and Light—	
" Subscriptions	72 14 0	Gas	4 2 9
" Donation	2 0 0	Coal	11 7 4
" Bequest (late Miss Mary Simpson)	60 0 0	Wood	0 8 6
" Collections—			15 18 7
Melksham Parish Church and		" Provisions—	
Forest	14 17 0	Groceries	10 0 8½
Atworth Church	1 0 0	Bread	5 17 7
Wesleyan Chapel	3 0 2	Vegetables	3 18 9½
Ebenezer Chapel, Union Street	0 13 10	Meat	19 5 11
		Wines, Spirits, and Beer ..	6 10 0½
	19 11 0	Milk	5 11 8½
" Subsistence of Patients	23 13 0		61 4 9
" Baths, &c.	1 10 2	" Postages	0 5 1
" Melksham Cricket Club (by Mr. Fournier)	1 10 0	" Wages	34 0 0
" Tin Boxes	1 10 8	" Sundries, Repairs, &c.	7 19 3½
" Interest from Hampshire and North		" Washing	3 2 0½
Wilts Bank	1 1 9	" Printing and Stationery	3 6 5
		" Medicines	16 3 1
		" Rent	17 0 0
		" Furniture and Equipments	1 10 0
		Balance	102 3 4
			£252 12 7
	£252 12 7		
Balance brought down	102 3 4		

THOMAS MATRAVERS, Hon. Sec.



List of Patients treated in the Melksham Cottage Hospital,
From 1st OCTOBER, 1876, to 30th SEPTEMBER, 1877.

No.	Sex.	Age.	Admitted.	Injury or Disease.	Discharged.	Results.	Days in Hosptl
1	F.	48	24th Oct. 1876	Congestion of Lungs.....	19th Dec. 1876	Relieved ..	57
2	M.	12	1st November	Injury to Knee	19th Decembr.	Cured	49
3	F.	18	4th November	Compound Fracture of Finger..	1st December	Cured	28
4	F.	19	28th November	Ulcerated Throat	5th December	Cured	8
5	M.	24	4th December	Hydrocele Operation	23rd Decembr.	Cured	20
6	F.	18	1st Jan. 1877	Epilepsy	29th Jan. 1877	Relieved ..	28
7	M.	17	1st January..	Hæmoptysis	29th January	Relieved ..	28
8	F.	50	3rd January..	Debility	7th March ..	Relieved ..	64
9	F.	7	5th January..	Abscesses	2nd February	Relieved ..	29
10	M.	12	15th January	Wound	12th March ..	Relieved ..	57
11	M.	54	23rd January	Amputation of Finger	7th March ..	Cured	44
12	F.	65	2nd April....	Sunstroke	30th April ..	Relieved ..	28
13	F.	20	10th April ..	Ulceration of Throat.....	17th April ..	Cured	7
14	F.	34	13th April ..	Bursitis	27th May....	Cured	45
15	F.	25	16th April ..	Anæmia	14th May....	Relieved ..	29
16	M.	19	15th June ..	Contusion	13th July....	Cured	28
17	M.	69	18th June ..	Epithelioma of Lip—Operation	2nd July	Cured	14
18	F.	31	18th June ..	Debility	3rd July	Died	16
19	M.	33	24th August	Rheumatic Inflammation of the right Knee			38
20	M.	30	26th August	Rheumatism	3rd September	Cured	9
21	M.	27	29th August	Fracture of the Patella			33
22	M.	22	30th August	Ulcerated Legs			32
23	M.	24	8th September	Incipient Phthisis	6th October..	Relieved ..	29
24	M.	43	10th Septembr	Carbuncle	29th Septembr	Cured	20
25	M.	46	12th Septembr	Intra Cranial Disease			19
26	F.	19	28th Septembr	Acute Rheumatism			3
							762



BALANCE SHEET

1868 £84-18s-10d
1988 Prices £2577-43p
1900 £218-10s-0½d
1988 Prices £8885-92p
1918 £726-11s-10d
1988 Prices £12,682-44p

Budget for 1988
£668,838

Balance Sheets converted to 1988 prices on the Centenary of Melksham Hospital.

•••

LETTER OF SYMPATHY TO MRS MANNINGS, MEMBER OF STAFF - FROM MATRON TRANTER 1958 Mrs Mannings then came under West Wilts Hospitals Committee not BDHA.

Dear Mrs Mannings

I would like to express my sincere sympathy with you and your family in your sad loss. My thoughts go out to you at this time.

It will be in order if you wish to return on Wednesday next March 26th.

Yours sincerely,

Kath. M. Tranter

•••

Contributed by
Mrs Betty Hibberd
2nd Receptionist at Melksham Hospital on its present site - the first Receptionist went on to become a nurse.

I was 14 years old when I started work at Melksham Hospital - on its present site - I was the 2nd Receptionist. I had a uniform which consisted of a green topstitched overall, black stockings and black shoes. My hours were 8.30-5.00pm 5 days a week I earned 12/6d a week.

I remember one particular incident when I had just returned to work after being on Annual Leave, I had got something in my eye - Dr Campbell was working at the hospital then - anyway, he removed the foreign body in my eye and put a big pad on it - my eye that is not the foreign body - and sent me back to work, as I approached the Reception area, the Out-Patients bell was ringing and there was no-one else around I answered the door myself, there in the doorway stood a large man! he had cut his finger and was holding it up in the air, he had some sort of bandage

wrapped around it, we just stood and stared at each other for a few seconds then suddenly burst out laughing, we could both see the funny side of the situation, me with a patch over one eye and him with a bandage on his finger, unfortunately Matron came along just at that point and I'm afraid she did not think it was very funny at all and I got a ticking off for laughing at a patient - things were so strict and serious in those days.

One day someone brought in some White Lillies and asked me if I could take them down to the women's ward, I was half way to the ward with them when Matron - Miss Jones, stopped me and sternly told me that White Lillies were 'NEVER to be taken into the wards' and I was to go and put them in the Mortuary and I certainly had no desire to go in there now, but in those days you did what you were told whether you liked it or not so I nervously started to make my way towards the Mortuary walking as slowly as I could, I could feel myself gradually getting paler as I got nearer to the Mortuary by the time I reached the door I was as white as the Lillies in my hands, as I stood by the door willing myself to open it, Mr Edwards, the gardener, saw me and came across to me, I'll always remember his kindness to me on that day, he calmed me down, assured me that there was nothing to be afraid of and actually came into the Mortuary with me, even then I put the Lillies down as quickly as I could and got out of there as fast as my legs would take me.

There was another occasion that stands out in my memory. The Ice Cream Van used to stop outside the hospital on his daily rounds and this particular day I was listening to the sound of his familiar bell, Sr Salter - who had a rather forbidding appearance - approached me and said 'Miss Lewis', 'run out and buy three ice creams', I couldn't believe my ears, I never envisaged her as the sort of person that would buy an ice cream, I went to buy the ice creams and when I returned she said 'now here's one for you', 'now I'm going up to the Matron's flat you go and hide yourself behind Out-Patients and don't let anyone see you eating it'. After that I had a totally different opinion of Sr Salter.

Life was very strict and disciplined in those days but somehow you always felt very secure within that discipline.

•••

Contributed by
Mrs Keir
Wife of Dr Ivan Keir and formerly Sr Wilshire who was the 1st Male Ward Sister at Melksham Hospital from 1938-1946.

The Hospital open in July 1938 with Matron and four Nursing Sisters, two Staff Nurses and eight SEN's.

A Night Sister — with two Nurses

Male Ward Sister (combined post with Theatre)

Women's Ward Sister (combined with the Children's Ward)

Outpatients and X-Ray Sister Combined

A Staff Nurse and two Sisters to each ward and one Nurse to help in OPD.

At the end of twelve months the Staff Nurses left to get married and as broke out could not be released. Alterations were then made.

An Assistant Matron and Sister Tutor combined post were appointed. Male Ward Sister then became Relief Theatre Sister and the appointment of a Children's Ward Sister who was also responsible for the Theatre. There were quite a few changes as the hospital became a part time training school.

Two Years in Melksham and a further two years at the Bristol Royal Infirmary or two years at the Salisbury Infirmary.

A Theatre Sister appointed with Male Sister doing relief Theatre duties as well as surgeons from Bath had Theatre lists three times a week, local Doctors doing mostly their own emergencies.

Extra Nurses taken on for training. Sister got a week-end off a month, Nurses a day a month and all had a ½ day a week and two hours daily.

Night Sister had three nights off a month, when a Ward Sister had to take on her duties — usually in relays. Night Nurses had two nights a month off.

House Committee of local village ladies took place monthly in the Board Room with the Matron, followed by inspections of Wards, Kitchens and Nurses Homes.

Patients were all visited and enquiries made as to whether they had any complaints etc. A medical meeting with local people was also held monthly regarding costs, in-patients, operations and length of stay of patients, deaths etc. Eventually Theatre and OPD became Sisters combined post; The Out-patients Sister doing the Children's and X-rays.

VAD Nurses came in to help very often daily as Training Staff moved on so there was quite a constant change of ward staff.

I remember one particular incident when there was an Air Force tragedy where a vehicle had careered into a group of Airmen on site and seriously injured 13 men. We had to carry out our Major Accident Procedure and we had to admit all 13 men. I was on duty at the time and I had to call out every available Nurse and Doctor. The Doctors had to call out surgeons from the Royal United Hospital in Bath. Eventually arrangements

were made for these patients to be transferred to RAF Wroughton, but it was an incident I shall never forget.

In 1946 I left Melksham Hospital to get married and became Mrs Ivan Keir.

•••

HOSPITAL SURVEY — MINISTRY OF HEALTH HOSPITAL SERVICES IN SOUTH WEST AREA 1945

Melksham Hospital was built in 1937-8 on a site of 2¼ acres of which 2 acres are available for expansion. The new Hospital was the gift of a benefactress and replaced a Hospital founded in 1868. The whole is well planned and expensively furnished and equipped. The Operating Theatres major and minor are good. Two wards of 12 beds each, one of 8 beds and 5 for private patients comprise the in-patient accommodation. The questionnaire returned to the Nuffield Trust mentions a compliment of 44.

Sanitary annexes are good and each main Ward has its own Ward kitchens, clothes room linen and duty room. A mobile x-ray has been provided. The O.D.P. Department is small but probably adequate and includes rooms for the treatment of casualties and dental cases. The kitchens are excellent. The Old Hospital is being used as an emergency Maternity Home in the Government Evacuation Scheme and the Committee hope that in due course the premises will become the Maternity Home for local cases. The medical staff consists of 5 General Practitioners who are assisted by Specialists from Bath, 2 General Surgeons, Gynaecologist and General Physician. All these Specialists are on call.

Photo Titles

- 1 — THE GARDEN
- 2 — MELKSHAM HOSPITAL — LOWBOURNE SITE
NEAR LABOUR CLUB
- 3 — CHILDRENS WARD
- 4 — STAFF RELAXING (MATRON — MISS BEAVER,
SR. SALTER, NURSE GAIN, MRS WESTON —
COOK, MISS PARK AND MISS PAGE — MAIDS)
- 5 — STAFF OUTSIDE MELKSHAM HOSPITAL ON
THE LOWBOURNE SITE
- 6 — WOMENS WARD
- 7 — MENS WARD
- 8 — STAFF OUTSIDE MELKSHAM HOSPITAL ON
THE LOWBOURNE SITE
- 9 — MELKSHAM HOSPITAL ORIGINAL SITE &
STAFF & PATIENTS DURING WAR
- 10 — 3RD RIGHT STANDING, DR. SPENCE GIVING
FIRST AID INSTRUCTION



No.1



No.6



No.2



No.7



No.3



No.8



No.4



No.9



No.5



No.10



No.1



No.4



No.2

- 1 - 3RD FROM LEFT SISTER NORTH OUTSIDE
CHILDRENS WARD ON LABOUR CLUB SITE
2 - PHYLISS GODSALL, KITCHEN ASSISTANT AND
MOTHER TO IVAN
3 - DOMESTICS
4 - NURSE BUTLER ON LABOUR CLUB SITE
5 - LILL PARKES, ASSISTANT COOK OUTSIDE
CYCLE SHED



No.3



No.5

FROM MY WINDOWS

I have just arrived in Port Stanley, Falkland Islands; now, being the end of September 1991. Though Spring is not far away, the weather is still very Wintry indeed. My six months stay will be spent in a mobile home, from which I have magnificent views.

A pair of Upland geese glide past leisurely seeking a landing site whilst a number of crimson breasted Military Starlings perch on the windbreak fence and sing wildly to attract mates and proclaim their territories.

As I gaze from the West Window, I can see Mount Tumbledown, Two Sisters and Wireless Ridge, made famous during the 1982 conflict with Argentina. Looking from the North window, on the hillside across the Harbour is inscribed the names of four ships — Beagle, Baracouta, Protector and Endurance. "Beagle" and "Baracouta" cruised around the Islands keeping law and order during the 1890's. H.M.S. "Protector" was a target-towing vessel which was converted to an Antarctic Ice-Patrol ship, but was replaced in 1968 by H.M.S. "Endurance". Endurance was due to be withdrawn in the 1980's but during the 1982 conflict played an important role in the retaking of South Georgia. However, she has just been withdrawn due to hull-weakness and will be replaced at the end of the year by a chartered Norwegian vessel "Polar Circle" to continue patrolling the Antarctic, South Georgia and the Falklands. On the hill above Gypsy Cove stands an old Naval gun — a remnant of the second World War.

There are several wrecks visible in the Harbour. The "Charles Cooper" (a North Atlantic packet ship); "Egeria" (a barque containing cement which sprung a leak!); the "Thellum" (which had trouble rounding Cape Horn when overloaded) and the "Lady Elizabeth" in Whalebone Cove.

When the sea is rough, the white horses could well be a million swimmers each creating their own effervescence in a race to reach the end of the Harbour. Two mountains dominate to the North, Mount Lowe and Twelve o'clock Mountain. Quite often, a mist rolls on from these mountains and thence across the Harbour. A ship is moored just across the Harbour through the Narrows (the entrance formed by Two Points, Navy Point and Engineer Point), and their launch is producing an enormous bow-wave as it cuts across to the "floating-dock". When ships are moored at this dock, at night, the area is a mass of fairy-lights — sprinkled with green, red and orange. The effect is doubled with their reflections in the mildly agitated waters. The serene spectacle is interrupted only by gulls swooping around in the upper limits of the glow. At a distance they appear as slowly

moving orange sparks caught in the turbulence of a fire. Indeed, the Harbour is alight!

I shall continue looking through the windows for the large ice-burg which is currently floating from the Antarctic towards us; but at present, visibility is severely limited by a snowstorm and I can only see the washing-line!

Contributed by

**Angela Baber,
Falkland Islands, Sept 1991.**



One of my most vivid recollections of Melksham Hospital was when I was a patient during the 50's. I was admitted on 12 Dec for a minor operation. I took rather a long time to come out of the anaesthetic but when I eventually did start to come round I could hear the choir singing — this was the customary annual Carol Service for the patients — but as I was still in a bit of a haze I began to think that I was in heaven, well what else could I think, there I was half way between reality and dreamland and this very heavenly sound drifting in from somewhere out of the blue or so it seemed to me at the time.

Another of my memories connected with the hospital is when I saw an advertisement in the Wiltshire Times asking for volunteers for the Red Cross to help run a weekly nursery clinic, and I became involved in one of the first groups to help District Nurses to weigh and register babies just after the last war, Alice Smith was in charge at that time and the Clinic was run in the building which is now the Spar Shop.

**Contributed by
Mrs Hill**



I was born in Sandy Lane, Nr Chippenham, but Melksham was never far out of our minds because we could always smell the rubber burning from the Avon Rubber Co. During the 1914 war my father was in the Armed Forces and I was at home looking after my mother. I remember an incident towards the end of the war when my mother and I caught the flu virus in the first epidemic of flu, I was actually recovering from the virus — I remember it was a beautiful day and I was sat out in the garden — suddenly the Melksham hooters began to sound to announce the end of the war, I ran inside to tell my mother that I thought the war had ended, she was so excited she put her cardigan on and ran down to the village church to ring the bell to spread the good news to the villages.

After the war my mother used to hire a pony and trap during the summer holidays to take us to Devizes Market it was our special treat and I used to look forward to it, but when we got to Dunkirk Hill we had to get out and walk because the poor old horse couldn't take the load so we had to let him have a drink before we continued to walk the rest of the way up the hill.

We eventually moved to Whitley and I lived there for 40 years before moving into Melksham. Melksham Hospital was on the site of the Labour Club then we were soon to discover what a wonderful little hospital it was and indeed still is, unfortunately my mother became very ill and was admitted there where she eventually died but the care and attention she received while she was a patient left a lasting and affectionate memory of caring and kindness that is still evident today as I myself have had occasion to experience.

**Contributed by
Mrs Williams**



I remember Melksham Hospital when it was on the site of the Labour Club and Sister Beaven was there then and when Melksham Hospital was built on its present site my husband and I were involved in the group of people who started the buy a brick scheme we were very proud to be part of the team that were helping to establish our new up-to-date hospital. At that time most of the fund raising carried out by the various organisations in the town concentrated on the hospital and the people would regularly donate such items as food, newspapers, etc. Sr Washbourne was the Sister Tutor then and Miss Jones was the Matron, I remember Mrs Rosewarne, present Matron, as a Sister.

I was born in Broughton Gifford and moved to Melksham when I got married in 1934, we had a Ladies and Gents outfitters which is now Hodges and we also ran Childrens and babies shop which is now owned by Mr Compel, Chemist.

I have been a patient in Melksham Hospital several times and have always received wonderful treatment from the staff who were always very friendly and attentive, but I think my most pleasant memories of Melksham Hospital are of when the nurses used to live in and the Christmas party which was held regularly every year which we used to attend and thoroughly enjoy. We are so lucky to have such a lovely Community Hospital with such kind and dedicated staff. I sincerely hope that Melksham Hospital will continue to flourish and grow.



When I answered my telephone one day a voice asked me if I would contribute something for inclusion in a book about Melksham and round about. I replied that I supposed I could write since I had worked at 'Spencers' for twenty nine years and it came as quite a shock to me to think that there was anyone in the town who had never even heard of it. Upon thinking about it the population of Melksham must have changed considerably since I left Spencers in 1966. In common with so many firms it was 'taken over' and became 'G.E.C.'. I started working there in 1938 when cycling to work was a pleasure, very little traffic, tree lined, winding road which, when travelling on it after dark one could shut one's eyes upon getting into a bus and, with some concentration, know every bend until arriving at Lacoek. During snowy or icy weather roads were a bit late in getting gritted and when going by bus we had to push the bus away from the curb in order to get it going again from the Lacoek bus stop and jump on it again quickly before it got up speed.

Up until the War broke out the cleanliness of the river made it a joy for bathing and in the summer we used often to go to the bathing place on the left hand side of the river end of Scotland Road from where one could also hire a rowing boat. Alas the river changed almost overnight when serious pollution was caused by the Chippenham sewage works being unable to cope with the 'invasion' of troops and evacuees during the War. Fish stocks were killed and in due course an epidemic of poliomyelitis broke out and river bathing lost its popularity.

I enjoyed working at Spencers but when the Lacoek sub-postmaster retired and someone was needed to take over the task I weighed up all the advantages of working at home, no buses to wait for, being in Lacoek all the time and being able to take a greater part in village life, and handed in my notice. I held the post for nineteen years before I decided to retire.

Visitors to the village often ask 'what on earth is there to do in Lacoek'. There are many organisations for those willing to take part: the church and its associates, the school and its various groups, 60 Plus, Women's Institute, Mothers' Union, Playgroup, Mums and Toddlers, Brownies, Guides, Cubs, Garden and Allotment Association, darts, cricket, football and such. Many events, especially musical, are held at Lacoek Abbey which was once the home of William Henry Fox-Talbot who invented Photography and for much of whose work there is now a museum.

Lacoek's existence can be traced back to Saxon times when it consisted of a few dwellings on the banks of a small stream and the name comes from the Saxon 'Lacuc' meaning little stream.

In the thirteenth century the Abbey was founded as a nunnery, when many workers came here after they had finished working on Salisbury Cathedral and there is still someone living near Lacock who can trace his ancestry back to that time. Some local people can trace their family trees back to the 17th Century. More workmen called for more dwellings and with the growth of the woollen industry Lacock grew into a busy town and from the thirteenth century until the eighteenth century it prospered and held a weekly market and a three-day fair at 'St. Thomastide' in October and at one time a population of 1700. With the decline of the woollen industry Lacock had many poor people and a workhouse was built in 1833 but in 1861 it was closed and the poor and destitute were sent to Chippenham to the building we now know as St. Andrew's Hospital.

In 1840 Lacock had 41 traders including: butchers (one with slaughterhouse), bakers, grocers, coal merchant, mason, plumber, glazier, malster, brewer and hop merchant, plasterer and tiler, boot and shoe makers, wheelwright, carpenter, chairmaker, blacksmiths, millers, tailor, saddle and harness maker, draper, beer retailers, many farmers and later in the century there were also a farrier, hurdle maker, stationer and fancy goods, gravel merchant, own police constable, and public vaccinator and undertaker.

The houses in the village are very varied in design, the oldest 14th century and the newest building, the Village hall, was built in 1890. Practically all the houses in the village belonged to the Talbot family of Lacock Abbey but in 1944, having realised that doing all the necessary repairs would be an impossible task for her, the owner, the late Miss Matilda Talbot, gave the Abbey and the village into the care of the National Trust. When houses became empty priority consideration is given to people with Lacock family connections before letting them to 'outsiders' thus helping to maintain a village community.

The Village Hall was built by the 'Oddfellow's' organisation but about 1969 they gave the National Trust the opportunity to buy it and lease it to the Parish Council for use as a Village Hall with the provision that the Parish Council should maintain the interior in good condition. At that time it was badly in need of a great deal of work being done to bring it up to an acceptable standard and in order to start fund-raising it was decided to revive the Village Fair. In 1969 it raised £946 and it has been an annual event ever since, being organised by a Village Fair committee. The hall is one of which can be justly proud and now includes an extension consisting of a room a little smaller than the main hall and good storage space. As well as funds for the

Village Hall the annual fair is also helping local organisations and charities for they all pay a small fee for a space for a stall and then keep their profit for themselves.

Gradually over the past century, with the growth of the popularity of the motor car and later the supermarket Lacock has been reduced to only one grocer with post office and off licence plus the National Trust Gift shop, a craft shop, a Goldsmith and Silversmith's, and a pottery. In 1964 there was an event which must have been one of the greatest blessings which could have been bestowed on Lacock, it was the year in which the Lacock By-Pass came into being, before which all north to south, and vice versa, traffic passed through the village by way of West Street. The volume of traffic now using that road has grown beyond all earlier imagination. Now we have also a mini by-pass which takes through traffic from the East away from the village centre. This short road has been named 'Hither Way' because the field through which it has been cut used to be known as Hither Cow Field. Lacock is quite a sizeable parish with about 1100 parishioners. The railway halt was closed many years ago but there is a large community living nearby and other communities are to be found at Notton, Reybridge, Bowden Hill, Wick Lane, and at Lackham, formerly a private estate and one of the five manors of Laycock, but since the last war, during which time it was inhabited by members of the armed forces, it has become a well known College of Agriculture and Enterprise.

Lacock residents have had the pleasure of 'mod-cons' as from the 1920's, electricity having been brought in in the mid 20's and water, gas and sewage system being installed during the 1930's. A great change from having to pump water from a well (lovely, sparkling clear cold water at all times), and from having a flickering candle to light ones way up a dark garden path to the one, two or even three seater lavatory, with it's bucket of ashes instead of a chain. There were two types, vault which was emptied when though fit and the bucket variety which was emptied once a week by a gentleman going round fairly late at night with an outside bucket on wheels. Baths were usually taken in front of the fire with water heated in the old 'copper' after the family washing had been done. The copper having been heated with household rubbish, wood and the odd bucket of coal which was set light to an hour or two before the washing could be started.

**Contributed by
Peggy Butler, Chippenham**



"JAMES"

Once upon a time there was a little boy called 'James'. He was very sad because he didn't like school, and each morning when his mother woke him up he always asked her "Is it school today mummy?" and she would reply "Yes it is, now hurry up or you will be late". James slowly got dressed and came downstairs looking quite sorry for himself, and his mother told him to "cheer up", if you don't go to school and learn lots of things you won't be a clever boy when you grow up." "Oh, alright" said James, and he set off down the road, on the way he met lots of boys and girls hurrying past him, James just took his time and at last he reached the school as the last bell was ringing and every was rushing into assembly, the teachers just looked at him as he took his place with the others. Everyone was very quiet as the Head-teacher began to speak, "Now children to-days assembly is going to be different, as the sun is shining so beautifully, I have decided to take you all to the sea-side for the day, what do you think of that?" and all the children, including James, shouted "Hurray! Hurray!".

The children filed smartly into the yard in pairs, and then came a big coach to take them on the journey, which only took over 1 hour to get there. When they arrived the sea looked so lovely, with the blue water and the white waves just rippling. James could not believe it was true, as he had never been to the sea-side before. He had great fun playing on the sand, making sand castles with other boys and girls, the paddling in the water, and they all had a donkey ride too. Then it was time to eat, the teachers clapped their hands and the children came up in turn to get a picnic each, all prepared by the teacher, they had sandwiches, crisps, cake and ice-cream from the big van with the bell on it. Everything was wonderful, and James was so happy. It was almost time for the children to pack-up and leave the beach clean, no-one minded doing that at all and the teachers praised them for their good effort. They all got into the coach and it wasn't long before they were on the road home again. When James arrived home his mother said "Your a bit late James, you're dinner is almost cold." and James just told her of his wonderful surprise all he wanted to do was clean his teeth and have a wash and go to bed, but before he went he looked at his mother and said "I'm so pleased you made me go to school today and I will never want to miss even one day again." That happy Summer's Day proved to be a great change in James' life.

This story has been contributed by an ex-patient in the hope that it will help other parents who may experience the same problem with starting school -
Mrs E M Burton.



Friends of Melksham Hospital and Community

Contributed by
Alan Weymouth
League of Friends Committee Member

Asked to write a brief article on the history of the work of the friends of Melksham Hospital and Community seemed simple enough, that was until I realised that I had reckoned without the amazing number of individuals and organisations who over the lifetime of the Hospital had contributed to its amenities.

Arming myself with a potted history, I set about trying to put into a few paragraphs 31 years work by and for the community.

It soon became obvious that so many people have been involved that there would be a grave danger of leaving someone or some organisation out - so there are no references to either just please accept that the Friends are extremely grateful to everyone who has made it possible for them to make the significant contributions to the amenities at the Hospital over the past 31 years - since all the individuals and organisations who had previously helped the Hospital get together to formally launch the League of Friends.

A tour of the Hospital site will confirm that around virtually every corner you will find an amenity provided at some stage by the Friends, be it a piece of equipment, or a structure all has been donated from funding provided by the community.

The various achievements, like the buildings of the Physiotherapy Unit, the Operating Theatre Refurbishment, and more recently, the Casualty Unit Update, are all well documented, and appear to have gained the respect of people in the health service, patients, and the community generally - that is if the response in the street when fund-raising is anything to go by.

What is probably less well known is where the bulk of the money actually comes from, and the way decisions are reached about projects to fund.

New ideas are obviously rare - this book being one of the exceptions - and the Friends have to rely basically on tried and trusted fund-raising methods.

Throughout the Friends history the Garden Party - or Hospital Fete as it is popularly known - has been the major fund-raiser, in 1960 for example, the first fete where records are available, £129 13s 7p profit was made,

inflation makes comparison pointless with the 1991 figure being of over £3600, except to say that over the years the Friends have been extremely grateful to the many individuals and organisations who come together each year to make the Fete so successful – and naturally to all the people who come along and so generously support it.

This might also be an appropriate moment to record the Friends thanks to the members of both the Hospital's staff, and the various health authority employees who also make a major contribution both to the Fete itself, and to the various fund-raising efforts throughout the year. Their efforts do not go unnoticed and are greatly appreciated.

The Friends have also been extremely lucky over the years in receiving donations from appreciative patients, and, particularly in recent years, many bereaved families have nominated them to benefit from donations in lieu of flowers in memory of loved ones. This is particularly poignant as one considers that even at a time of great stress and sadness people actually remember and support the work of the Friends.

As well as supporting the Fete, many local organisations make either regular or special one-off donations or grants, and obviously this is a very welcome source of income.

Throughout the Friends history, Membership has always been a difficult and time consuming exercise. A recent innivative leaflet drop inviting people to 'consider becoming a Member of the Friends....' met with considerable success, but a glance through the Minute Book showed that this brilliant 'new' idea had also been successful in 1970. So much for originality!

A big thank you to everyone who has joined the Friends this time, and also to all the people who have given so much time to collecting subscriptions over the years – it is certain that your efforts have not been wasted.

All decisions about the funding of projects are made at Quarterly Meetings of the Committees, who on a three yearly basis, are elected at the AGM which is held in January each year. Obviously the Matron and her staff have a major input into any proposals as they are more aware of the needs of the patients, but the final decisions on funding is down to the Committee.

In recent years the Friends have added 'and Community' to their title as it was recognised that there are major health care needs outside of the main Hospital building which require financial help – a good example of this was the £5000 donation made to help keep the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Service flying when financial restraints threatened to ground it. Applications for financial help can be made through the Friends of the Hospital.

All Members are entitled to attend the AGM and are able to nominate Members, or be nominated, for the Committee. The Officers of the Friends are elected at the AGM annually, and there are arrangements for ex-officio Committee Members to be elected to represent the various views of interested organisations.

To sum up, and begging to answer the question "What are the aims of the Friends?", I was somewhat surprised to find that my favourite definition was to be found in the very first set of Objectives and Rules formulated in 1955 by the Founder Members of the then League of Friends of the Melksham Hospital. They read:

i) To mobilise, encourage, foster and maintain the interest of the public in the patients and the support of the work of the Melksham Hospital ...

iii) To provide funds for the purpose ... of supplementing in such a manner as the League thinks fit the resources of the hospital service ...

v) To provide a link between the Melksham Hospital and the community which it serves.

I think those words sums it all up beautifully as these aims are as relevant today as they were then, and hopefully tend to lay dead the political point often made when fund-raising, that funding the needs of the health service shouldn't have to rely on charity, as though this were some modern day phenomenon.

The Friends of Melksham Hospital and Community do not fund the Hospital, they provide amenities for the patients which for various reasons could not be made available through the normal funding processes, and have done so with great distinction formally for 31 years, but effectively throughout the Hospitals history.

We are doing our best to improve health care facilities in the area ... WHY NOT JOIN US! Contact the Hospital for information.



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Sr. Brown (Pre-Nursing Student) 1955-56

I first started at Melksham Hospital at 12 years old, serving teas to the patients on Sat/Sun afternoons from St John's Ambulance and I had to get all my hours signed for by the Sr on the ward.

From 16-18 years I was a pre-nursing cadet and lived in, in the Nursing Home. I worked on the Mens Ward and in Casualty and Theatre and earned £6.00 per month.

In 1957 I left Melksham Hospital to commence my training at the Metropolitan Hospital, Kingsland Road, London for 3 years where I became a Staff Nurse. I then emigrated to Australia for £10.00 and after a few years returned to Melksham Hospital in June 1979 as part-time Staff Nurse on the Female Ward. I became Sister on the Men's Ward in October 1979 and continue today.

A final word from Sr Brown
Senior Sister at Melksham Hospital

CARTOON DRAWN BY A MEMBER OF STAFF — EARLY 1980's



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In compiling this material it has been my great privilege to meet so many kind and sincere people who so willingly contributed treasured photographs and memories. I consider myself truly honoured to have had the opportunity to walk down memory lane with so many fascinating people with a wealth of stories to tell.

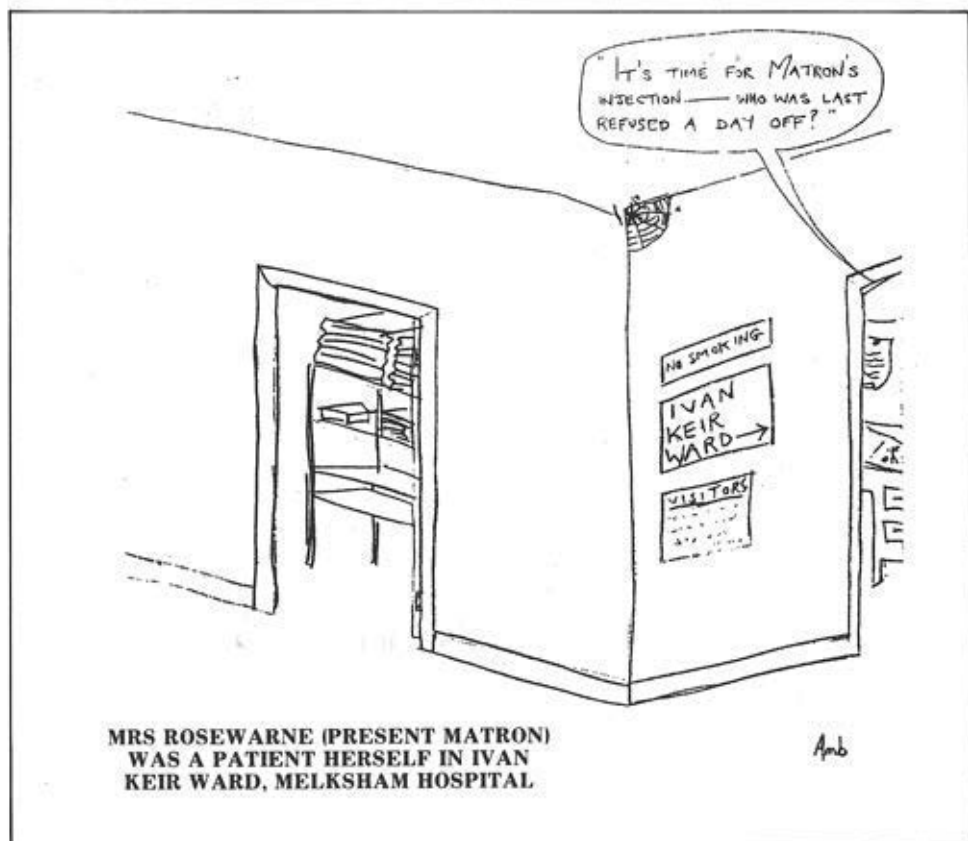
Very special thanks to all who have kindly given their time and taken the trouble to sort through memorabilia which has been generously donated in the hope that in some way this would contribute towards the continued success of the hospital for Melksham Hospital is the peoples hospital and holds a very special place in the hearts of so many people with a community spirit that is overwhelming.

The material included has been kept where possible to the style of its original form, to help presentation, because this book, as intended, has been a community project.

Final Credits

History of Melksham Hospital contributed by Mrs R Rosewarne — present Matron and Chairman of League of Friends.

Collated by Lillian Holland — Secretary to Matron and member of League of Friends Committee.



MRS ROSEWARNE (PRESENT MATRON)
WAS A PATIENT HERSELF IN IVAN
KEIR WARD, MELKSHAM HOSPITAL



Midwives employed by Nursing Association not Council. Bottom right, sitting down — Mrs Hill 60 years old



Lady Kathleen Stanley at Opening with Chairman of the League of Friends
Mr. C. F. Andrews



Dr. I. C. Keir and Matron, Miss E. Tranter talking to a Girl Guide Helper



A picture donated showing events at a fundraising day



A picture donated showing queuing for bargains on a fundraising day

DR. KEIR'S LOAN OF £1,000 TO LEAGUE

NEW BUILDING CAN GO AHEAD

MELKSHAM Hospital League of Friends is now in a position to go ahead with the new wing to the hospital housing the physiotherapy department. This was announced at the league's annual general meeting at the hospital on Thursday evening last week.

The Chairman (Mr. C. F. J. Andrews) said: "I hope that during the next twelve months we shall see the starting of our physiotherapy department. Our funds are near the mark, and I understand that if we raise another £1,000 the Regional Board will make up the balance."

"People have worked hard when money was coming in, but when it was not, interest waned. I would like to see on the general committee a small sub-committee set up because I feel there will be a need for work to be done by a smaller committee."

PRESIDENT'S LOAN

Dr. J. C. Keir, the league's 78-year-old president, announced that he would lend the league the £1,000 needed.

He said: "All our meetings have been overshadowed by the physiotherapy department problems, but I would like to remind members that this is not the only work of our society. We are near our goal now, and I have been assured by the Western Regional Board that if we have £6,000 we can start."

"I am prepared to guarantee that amount. I am not prepared to give it because I can't afford it, and because

I anonymously donated £100 a few years ago when I was in practice. Melksham is a growing industrial town and a physiotherapy department would be a great benefit. I am quite prepared to undertake the responsibility because I am sure it will be a great success."

The Chief Financial Officer of the West Wilts Hospitals Management Committee (Mr. E. G. Smallwood) told the meeting: "There is nothing to stop you from going ahead right away. I will do what I can on your behalf."

In his report the Treasurer (Mr. W. H. Chapman) said that the physiotherapy department appeal fund had reached £4,272 17s. In the receipts and payments account there was a balance in hand of £422. The July fête had raised £130 and the Melksham 60-Plus had raised £25 on their stall alone. About £22 had been received in subscriptions.

LEAGUE ANNIVERSARY

The Secretary (Miss J. Meadows) reported that during the year the league of friends at Bradford, Melksham and Trowbridge had provided new curtains for St. George's Hospital Semington, which had cost them £17 each. The year had marked the 21st anniversary of the formation of the league and it seemed fitting that news of the physiotherapy department should come at this time. She thanked the school teachers for their help with the collection of eggs at Christmas. Thanks to them, 2,100 eggs were collected last year. She was finding the work too much and she had decided to resign.

The Chairman thanked her for the work she had done during the past five years.

Mr. Michael Noad was elected secretary. The chairman and treasurer were re-elected.

MELKSHAM HOSPITAL 1991

*This photo donated free by ANTON J. GREOFF, THE SPREE,
CHURCH STREET, MELKSHAM*

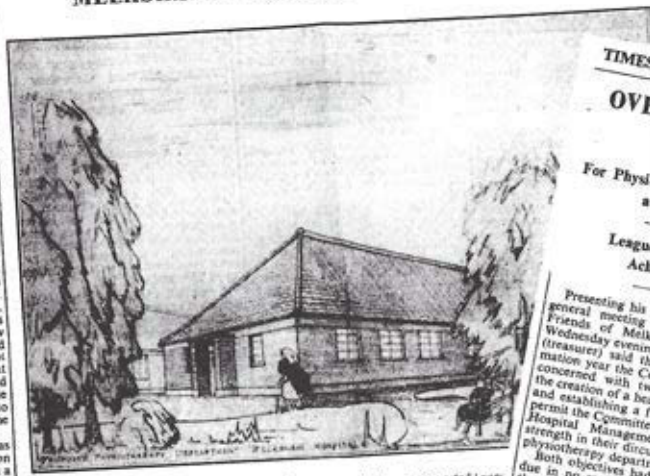


1991
FRONT ROW - CENTRE - MATRON ROSEWARNE WITH A SMALL SELECTION OF HER STAFF.
REPRESENTING EACH WARD AND DEPARTMENT OF MELKSHAM HOSPITAL WHICH TODAY BOASTS
60+ STAFF THROUGHOUT.

THE WILTSHIRE TIMES, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1955

PHYSIOTHERAPY UNIT SCHEME

MELKSHAM HOSPITAL FRIENDS' APPEAL



PICTURED above is an artist's impression of the proposed physiotherapy department at Melksham Hospital, an appeal for which was launched last month.

The appeal has been made by the League of Friends of the Hospital and about £8,500 will be needed for the new building. A good start has been made and local firms have responded magnificently. Over £500 has already been received, with a promise of "at least £1,000" from the Avon India Rubber Company.

There is, however, a long way to go yet before the building can be started, and during the coming months the League of Friends will be making a concerted effort to raise the money.

The President, Dr. Ivan Keir, has made a written appeal to business people in the town, and says that in Melksham physiotherapy work has increased enormously in the last few years.

At present, however, proper treatment is hampered by lack of space, as

the only room available—a converted private ward—is very small.

"We have been much concerned about this lack of proper facilities and have made every effort to get a government grant for this purpose," says Dr. Keir.

Unfortunately the present financial state of the country will not allow the regional hospital board to provide the money for some years to come.

"The cost has now been estimated at £8,500, but should present trends continue it will cost more the longer we wait. The need is urgent and we are sure that once this is realised the industries of Melksham and the local people will give generous support to our object, not only good in itself but one which should be of material benefit to Melksham district," added Dr. Keir.

As can be seen from the drawing, the new department is large enough to deal with a large number of patients, and the people as a whole are likely to benefit in Melksham. Part of it could

TIMES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1956

OVER £3,000 IN FUND

For Physiotherapy Department at Hospital

League of Friends' Achievement

Presenting his report at the annual general meeting of the League of Friends of Melksham Hospital on Wednesday evening, Mr. G. H. Cortis (treasurer) said that during the formation year the Committee had been concerned with two financial aims: the creation of a healthy general fund, and the establishment of a fund which would permit the Committee to approach the Hospital Management Board with strength in their discussions for a new physiotherapy department.

Both objectives had been achieved, due in no small measure to the enthusiasm of their President (Dr. I. C. Keir) and the untiring efforts of the Committee, especially the Secretary (Miss J. Meadows). On the Secretary's account their income had been derived from four sources: Subscriptions, £34 2s.; donations, £31 15s. 6d.; Hospital Sunday collection, £12 3s.; and garden party, £72 1s. 6d. Although their membership in the first year was satisfactory, it was the duty of them all to increase the figure until every household in Melksham was enrolled.

Apart from routine expenses incurred on stationery and advertising (£10 15s. 4d.) and membership of the National League of Friends (£2 2s.), their only expenditure had been for the benefit of the staff and patients of their two hospitals. They had given £30 towards Christmas parties at Melksham and Semington hospitals, and joined with Trowbridge and Bradford-on-Avon Leagues to provide a television set for the patients at Semington—a cost to themselves of £27 9s. 8d. The balance in hand at the end of December was £73 19s. 9d.

Turning to the accounts of the physiotherapy appeal fund, Mr. Cortis said that at the end of the year they had actually received in donations £1,042 11s. 6d. Local companies and tradesmen had promised a total of £1,625, including: Avon India Rubber Company, £1,000; Spencer (Melk-

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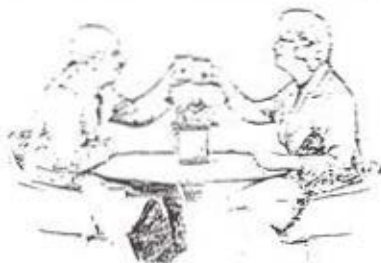
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